Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

# Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 01374 01 OF 02 110817Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 MCT-01 /054 W
----------068802 110840Z /13
R 101105Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0677
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 1374

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SF
SUBJECT: EASTERN CAPE SCHOOLS STILL SIMMER

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH, AT PRESENT, MOST OF THE COUNTRY'S TOWNSHIPS SCHOOLS ARE QUIETLY BACK IN OPERATION, THE EASTERN CAPE TOWNSHIPS, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN PORT ELIZABETH, HAVE CONTINUED TO SIMMER WITH VIOLENCE AND TO BE AFFLICTED WITH EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOYCOTTS. SUTDENTS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OFFER A VARITY OF REASONS FOR THIS CONTINUING UNREST, BUT THE MOST COMMON THEME IS THAT THE POLICE HAVE BADLY MISHANDLED THE SITUATION AND EXACERBATED AN ALREADY TOUCHY PROBLEM BROUGHT ON BY MOTIVATED STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT DUE TO HISTORICAL LINKS WITH THE BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT AND AN UNPOPULAR HOMELAND GOVERNMENT IN CLOSE PROXIMITY. END SUMMARY

2. THROUGHOUT SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACK TOWNSHIPS, MOST STUDENTS HAVE NOW PEACEFULLY RETURNED TO SCHOOL. THERE ARE VARYING LEVELS OF ATTENDANCE AND STILL TENSION IN SOME OF THE RAND TOWNSHIPS THAT COULD LEAD TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 01374 01 OF 02 110817Z

FURTHER DISRUPTIONS, BUT, AT PRESENT, THERE IS ONLY ONE CONTINUING TROUBLE SPOT FOR THE SAG. THAT IS THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE TOWNSHIPS, MOST NOTABLY THOSE AROUND PORT ELIZABETH. AS OTHER TOWNSHIPS BEGAN TO SETTLE DOWN AFTER OCTOBER, 1977, AND THE BOYCOTTS BEGAN TO FADE AWAY WHEN SCHOOL OPENED IN JANUARY, THE PORT ELIZABETH TOWNSHIPS AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, THE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

EAST LONDON AND KING WILLIAMS TOWN TOWNSHIPS CONTINUED
TO SIMMER. PERIODIC OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE, WITH STONE
THROWING, ARSON ATTEMPTS AT SCHOOLS, BUS SMASHING,
AND INTIMIDATION OF OTHER BLACKS, HAVE OCCURED EVER
SINCE. AT LEAST EIGHT PERSONS HAVE DIED OF WOUNDS
INFLICTED BY THE POLICE IN PORT ELIZABETH ALONE SINCE
CHRISTMAS AND SEVERAL OTHERS PROBABLY HAVE BEEN KILLED
IN PORT ELIZABETH AND THE EAST LONDON AREAS WHOSE DEATHS HAVE
GONE UNREPORTED OR UNCONFIRMED.

3. A RECENT VISIT TO THE AREA BY AN EMBASSY OFFICER
CONFIRMED THAT A GREAT DEAL OF TENSION STILL EXISTS
IN THE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITIES AND PERIODIC VIOLENCE IS
CONTINUING, MUCH OF IT UNREPORTED BY THE PRESS.
IN THE WEEK PRIOR TO THE EMBOFF'S VISIT THERE HAD
BEEN TWO ATTEMPTED BURNINGS OF SCHOOLS IN THE PORT
ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP OF NEW BRIGHTON. THERE WAS ONE
FIRE-BOMBING OF A SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
OFFICE IN PORT ELIZABETH ON THE DAY BEFORE THE
OFFICER'S VISIT, FEBRUARY 28, AND ON MARCH 8, A
YOUNG BLACK MAN BLEW HIMSELF UP IN CENTRAL PORT
ELIZABETH WHEN APPARENTLY TRYING TO PLANT A BOMB.
SCHOOL BOYCOTTS ARE CONTINUING IN THE TOWNSHIPS OF
NEW BRIGHTON, KWAZAKHELE AND ZWIDE WITH A REPORTED
AVERAGE OF 40 PERCENT ATTENDANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS
AND A LOW ATTENDANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS. ONE PRESS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 01374 01 OF 02 110817Z

ACCOUNT STATES THAT ALL OF THE TOWNSHIPS' 39,000
STUDENTS BOYCOTTED THE END-OF-YEAR EXAMS IN DECEMBER,
1977.

4. TALKS WITH STUDENTS, BLACK AND WHITE COMMUNITY
LEADERS AND REPORTERS FAMILIAR WITH THE AREA LEFT THE
RATIONALE BEHIND THE CONTINUING UNREST VAGUE AND
SOMETIMES CONTRADICTORY. POLICE OFFICIALS WERE UNWILLING
TO TALK ON THE SUBJECT, BUT ONE EARLIER PRESS ACCOUNT
QUOTES SOME PORT ELIZABETH AUTHORITIES AS SAYING
"SMALL GOUPS OF SOWETO AGITATORS" WERE REPONSIBLE
FOR THE UNREST. ALSO, THE OFFICIAL SAID, "CHILDREN
SEE A LOT IN THE NEWSPAPERS...SUCH AS THE UNITED
NATIONS AFFAIR AND THE UNITED STATES SITUATION AND
THEY ARE INFLUENCED." MOST PERSONS SPOKEN WITH ON
THE SPOT, BOTH BLACK AND WHITE, DISMISS THE OUTSIDE
AGITATOR THEORY. SOME OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS
STATE THAT PORT ELIZABETH AND EAST LONDON HAVE BEEN
HOTBEDS FOR BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS ADVOCATES FOR A LONG
TIME AND THE INFLUENCE, THOUGH NOW UNDERGROUND,
CONTINUES. OTHERS ADD THAT THE PROXIMITY TO THE
CISKEI HOMELAND AND THE STRONG ATTITUDES TAKEN BY

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

THE HOMELAND OFFICIALS AGAINST BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS
ACTIVISTS ALSO TENDS TO STOKE THE FIRE. BOTH GROUPS
SAY THAT POLICE MISHANDLING, OR ACTUAL INSTIGATION,
HAS EXACERBATED AN ALREADY VOLATILE SITUATION. ONE
REPORTER FOR THE FINANCIAL MAIL CITES THE POLICE
ARREST IN OCTOBER OF BLACK COMMUNITY LEADER WHO LED
A DEPUTATION TO THE BANTU AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION
BOARD TO DISCUSS COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND THE TEARGASSING
IN NOVEMBER OF A THOUSAND STUDENTS WHO WERE MEETING
PEACEFULLY TO DISCUSS TERMINATING THE BOYCOTT AS
EXAMPLES OF POLICE STUPIDTY AND INSENSITIVITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 01374 02 OF 02 110818Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 MCT-01 /054 W
----------068816 110840Z /13
R 101105Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0678
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRETORIA 1374

STUDENTS, HOWEVER, PUT THE BLAME SQUARELY ON THE POLICE.
THEY SAY THAT THE POLICE HAVE PURPOSEFULLY BEEN
INSTIGATING CERTAIN "THUGS" TO CAUSE RIOTS AND KEEP
THE UNREST GOING. WHEN THE STUDENTS HAVE PEACEFULLY
DEMONSTRATED OR BOYCOTTED, THE POLICE, THEY SAY,
HAVE STARTED VIOLENCE AND PROVOKED REACTIONS. ONE
STUDENT SAID IT WAS THE SECURITY POLICE WHO BOMBED
THE SACC OFFICE.

5. THERE SEEMS TO BE OBVIOUS CONTRADICTIONS BEHIND
THE MOTIVATIONS OF THE POLICE IN PROVOKING UNREST
IN THESE AREAS AND NONE OF THOSE STUDENTS WHO LEVELED
THE CHARGES COULD SATISFACTORILY EXPLAIN WHY THIS
MIGHT BE. ON THE OTHER HAND, AS MENTIONED ABOVE,
MOST OF THOSE SPOKEN TO POINTED AT POLICE INCOMPETENCE
OR VEN BRUTALITY AS A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE CONTINING
PROBLEMS. ONE AMERICAN REPORTER WHO HAD SPENT AN
EXTENSIVE TIME IN THE AREA SAID THAT RUMORS WERE

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

RIFE THAT THERE WAS TO BE A SHAKE-UP IN THE PORT ELIZABETH SECURITY POLICE BRANCH, PARTIALLY RELATED TO THE HANDLING OF STEVE BIKO, BUT ALSO THE CONTINUING UNREST IN THE AREA. THE REPORTER SAID THAT MAJOR SNYMAN, THE COMMANDER, WAS BEING FORCED TO RETIRE.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 01374 02 OF 02 110818Z

6. THE USE OF MAXIMUM FORCE THAT SEEMS TO BE THE POLICE OF THE POLICE IN THE PORT ELIXABETH AREA, PLUS THEIR CALLOUS ATTITUDE, WHICH WAS WITNESSED BY THE EMBOFF, DOES STAND OUT IN CONTRAST TO THE MORE HUMANE AND COMMUNITY-MINDED TACT THAT THE POLICE SEEM TO BE ATTEMPTING ELSEWHERE SINCE THE FIRST VICIOUS REACTIONS OF 1976. IT SEEMS, THEN, THAT A COINCIDENCE OF MOTIVATED STUDENT ACTIVISTS, A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT, AND INCOMPETENT AND REPRESSIVE POLICE AUTHORITIES, HAVE COMBINED TO CAUSE PORT ELIZABETH AND THE EASTERN CAPE TO REMAIN AT PRESENT THE ONLY AREA IN SOUTH AFRICA WHERE THE SAG'S HOPES OF DAMPENING DOWN STUDENT AND COMMUNITY UNREST HAVE NOT BEEN FULFILLED.
BOWDLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

# Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994
**Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED
**Concepts:** COMMUNITY RELATIONS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, BOYCOTTS, CIVIL DISORDERS
**Control Number:** n/a
**Copy:** SINGLE
**Draft Date:** 10 mar 1978
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960
**Decaption Note:**
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED
**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014
**Disposition Event:**
**Disposition History:** n/a
**Disposition Reason:**
**Disposition Remarks:**
**Document Number:** 1978PRETOR01374
**Document Source:** CORE
**Document Unique ID:** 00
**Drafter:** n/a
**Enclosure:** n/a
**Executive Order:** GS
**Errors:** N/A
**Expiration:**
**Film Number:** D780109-0556
**Format:** TEL
**From:** PRETORIA
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Image Path:**
**ISecure:** 1
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780382/aaaacrmj.tel
**Line Count:** 197
**Litigation Code IDs:**
**Litigation Codes:**
**Litigation History:**
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
**Message ID:** 739facc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
**Office:** ACTION AF
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Page Count:** 4
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Reference:** n/a
**Retention:** 0
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED
**Review Content Flags:**
**Review Date:** 19 apr 2005
**Review Event:**
**Review Exemptions:** n/a
**Review Media Identifier:**
**Review Release Date:** n/a
**Review Release Event:** n/a
**Review Transfer Date:**
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a
**SAS ID:** 3372506
**Secure:** OPEN
**Status:** NATIVE
**Subject:** EASTERN CAPE SCHOOLS STILL SIMMER
**TAGS:** PINT, PINS, SF
**To:** STATE
**Type:** TE
**vdkvgwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/739facc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
**Review Markings:**
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014